

Proponent Testimony of Peter Swartz
HB 6622 – An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Formularies and Lists of Covered Drugs

My name is Peter Swartz and I am resident of Berlin. I also live with multiple sclerosis (MS), neuropathy, and transverse myelitis.

I am writing this testimony in support of HB 6622. This bill would stop the practice of non-medical switching, which is when insurers remove a drug from their formulary or move it to a higher cost-sharing tier during a plan year. I have experienced this issue firsthand.

I was on a drug called Lyrica for 13 years and it helped me a great deal when it came to managing my neuropathy. Then, suddenly during a plan year, my insurer removed Lyrica from the formulary and told my doctor that I had to take gabapentin instead. I had previously taken gabapentin years prior and it was not nearly as effective for me as Lyrica. Because of this switch, my neuropathy worsened. Not only that, but the gabapentin required me to take five more capsules a day, which does not work for my body.

I know that this bill cannot help every person on every type of insurance plan, but I hope that you will take action on behalf of those you do have the power to protect. The practice of non-medical switching is just not right. When patients sign up for a plan, they expect the insurers to live up to their end of the contract. Please vote in favor of HB 6622.